

# In is the Only Way Out

In this excerpt from “Inner Engineering”, Sadhguru’s latest book, Sadhguru introduces us to the only way to experience sustainable inner wellbeing.

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**Sadhguru:** Everything you have done in your life so far has been in pursuit of a single thing. Whether you sought a career, started a business, made money, or built a family, it was always because you wanted just one simple thing: joy.

But somewhere along the way, life got complicated.

Somehow, for a human being, life doesn’t seem to end with survival; life begins with survival.

If you had been born as any other creature on this planet, it would have been very simple. Your needs would have just been physical. A full stomach would have been equivalent to a great day. Take a look at your dog or your cat: the moment their stomach is full, they are quite peaceful.

But when you come into this world as a human being, things change. An empty stomach is one problem: hunger. But a full stomach? A hundred problems! When our survival is in question, it is a big issue in our lives. But the moment it is taken care of, it doesn't seem to mean anything. Somehow, for a human being, life doesn't seem to end with survival; life begins with survival.

Today, as a generation of people, our survival process is better organized than ever before. You can go to a supermarket and buy everything you need for the entire year. You can do it without even stepping out of your home! Never before in the history of humanity has such a thing been possible. Things that even royalty could not afford a hundred years ago are accessible to the average citizen. We are the most comfortable generation to have ever lived on this planet. We have tried our best to fix the outside environment. If we fix it any more, there will be no planet left! But we definitely cannot say we are happier, more loving or more peaceful than our forefathers.

Why is this so? If it is not working, isn't it time to look at what's wrong? How can we continue to do something that has not worked for a thousand years? How much longer are we going to live with blueprints that clearly haven't delivered their promise?

It is time for a paradigm shift.

## **What is Wellbeing?**

Let us start with a single question: what do we consider to be a state of wellbeing?

Very simply, wellbeing is just a deep sense of pleasantness within. If your body feels pleasant, we call this health. If it becomes very pleasant, we call this pleasure. If your mind becomes pleasant, we call this peace. If it becomes very pleasant, we call this joy. If your emotions become pleasant, we call this love. If they become very pleasant, we call this compassion. If your life energies become pleasant, we call this bliss. If they become very pleasant, we call this ecstasy. This is all that you are seeking: pleasantness within and without. When pleasantness is within, it is termed peace, joy, happiness. When your surroundings become pleasant, it gets branded as success. If you're not interested in any of this and want to go to heaven, what are you seeking? Just otherworldly success! So, essentially all human experience is only a question of pleasantness and unpleasantness in varying degrees.

Inner pleasantness is a surefire insurance for the making of a peaceful society and a joyful world.

But how many times in your life have you lived an entire day blissfully – without a single moment of anxiety, agitation, irritation, or stress? How many times have you lived in utter and absolute pleasantness for twenty-four hours? When was the last time it happened to you?

The amazing thing is that for most people on this planet, not a single day has happened exactly the way they want it! Of course, there is no one who has not experienced joy, peace, even bliss, but it is always fleeting. They are unable to sustain it. They manage to get there, but it keeps collapsing. And nothing earth-shattering needs to happen for it to collapse. The simplest things throw people off balance and out of kilter.

It is like this. You go out today and someone tells you that you are the most beautiful person in the world: you're floating on cloud nine. But then you come home, and the folks at home tell you who you really are: everything crashes!

Sound familiar?

Why do you need to be pleasant within? When you are in a pleasant inner state, you are naturally pleasant to everyone and everything around you. No scripture or philosophy is needed to instruct you

to be good to others. It is a natural outcome when you are feeling good within yourself. Inner pleasantness is a surefire insurance for the making of a peaceful society and a joyful world.

The only thing that stands between you and your wellbeing is a simple fact: you have allowed your thoughts and emotions to take instruction from the outside rather than the inside.

Besides, your success in the world depends essentially on how well you harness the prowess of the body and mind. So, in order to achieve success, pleasantness has to be the fundamental quality within you.

Above all, there is substantial medical and scientific evidence today that your body and mind function at their best when you are in a pleasant state. It is said that if you can remain blissful for twenty-four hours, your intellectual capabilities can be almost doubled. Just settling the internal muddle and allowing clarity to surface can achieve this.

Now, the same life energy that you refer to as “myself” has sometimes been very [happy](#), sometimes miserable, sometimes peaceful, sometimes in turmoil. The same life energy is capable of all those states. So, if you were given a choice about the kind of expression your life energies should find, what would you choose? Joy or misery? Pleasantness or unpleasantness?

The answer is obvious. The ways may vary from person to person, but whether you’re trying to make money, hitting the bottle, or attempting to get to heaven, pleasantness is the only goal. So, some think it’s in the wine, and others think it’s in the divine, but pleasantness is what everyone’s seeking.

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## **Make Your Dream the Way You Want**

On a certain day, a lady went to sleep. In her sleep, she had a dream. She saw a hunk of a man, staring at her. Then he started coming closer – closer and closer.

He was so close that she could even feel his breath. She trembled – not in fear.

Then she asked, “What will you do to me?” The man said, “Well lady, it’s your dream!”

We need to understand that unless we do the right things, the right things will not happen to us: this is true not just of the outside world, but also the inside.

What’s happening in your head is your dream. At least your dream should happen the way you want it, shouldn’t it? Even if the world doesn’t happen the way you want it, at least your thoughts and emotions should happen the way you want them to. Right now, these aren’t taking instructions from you because you are handling the whole human mechanism accidentally.

The human mechanism is the most sophisticated physical form on the planet. You are the greatest piece of technology, but the problem is you don’t know where the keyboard is. As a result, the simple life process is taking a toll upon humanity. Just to earn a living, to reproduce, to raise a family, and then one day to fall dead – what a challenge! It is amazing how human beings struggle just to do what every worm, insect, bird, and animal does quite effortlessly.

Put simply, our inner ecology is a mess. Somehow we think that fixing outer conditions will make everything okay on the inside. But these past 150 years are proof that technology will only bring comfort and convenience to us, not wellbeing. We need to understand that unless we do the right things, the right things will not happen to us: this is true not just of the outside world, but also the inside.

## **Don’t Bullshit Yourself**

On a certain day, a bull and a pheasant were on a field. The bull was grazing and the pheasant was picking ticks off the bull – a perfect partnership. Looking at the huge tree at the edge of the field, the pheasant said, “Alas, there was a time I could fly to the topmost branch of the tree. Now I do not have enough strength in my wing to even get to the first branch.”

The bull said nonchalantly, “Just eat a little bit of my dung every day and watch what happens. Within two weeks, you’ll get to the top.”

The pheasant said, “Oh come on, that’s rubbish. What kind of nonsense is that?”

The bull said, “Try it and see. The whole of humanity is on it.”

Very hesitantly, the pheasant started pecking. And lo, on the very first day, he reached the first branch. Within a fortnight, he had reached the topmost branch. He sat there, just beginning to enjoy the scenery.

The old farmer, rocking on his rocking chair, saw a fat old pheasant on top of the tree. He pulled out his shotgun and shot the bird off the tree.

Moral of the story: bullshit may get you to the top, but it never lets you stay there!

You can bullshit yourself into all kinds of emotional states, you can somehow crank up some wellbeing for yourself, but the problem is, it doesn’t last. The weather could bring it down. The stock market could make it come crashing down. And even if it does not collapse, living in anticipation that it might is bad enough! As long as your inner life is enslaved to external situations, it will remain a precarious condition. There is no other way for it to be.

What then is the way out?

## **The Paradigm Shift**

The way out is a very simple change in direction. You just need to see that the source and basis of your experience is within you. Human experience may be stimulated or catalyzed by external situations, but the source is within. Pain or pleasure, joy or misery, agony or ecstasy, happens only inside you. Human folly is that people are always trying to extract joy from the outside. You may use the outside as a stimulus or trigger, but the real thing always comes from within.

Right now, you are reading this. Where do you see this text? Use your finger and point to where you see it. Do you think the image is outside you?

Think again.

You remember how it works? The light is falling upon the object, reflecting, going into the lens of your eyes, and projected as an inverted image on your retina – you know the whole story. So, you are actually seeing the object within yourself.

Where do you see the whole world?

Again, within yourself.

Everything that ever happened to you, you experienced right within you. Light and darkness, pain and pleasure, agony and ecstasy – all of it happened within you. If someone touches your hand right now, you may think you are experiencing their hand, but the fact of the matter is you are only experiencing the sensations in your own hand. The whole experience is contained within. All human experience is one hundred percent self-created.

If your thought and your emotion are of your making, you can mold them any way you like. There is scientific proof today that without ingesting a drop of alcohol or any other substance, you can get fully intoxicated by yourself. An Israeli scientist, Raphael Mechoulam, and his research team initiated a project that eventually isolated a “bliss molecule” in the human system. In lay terms, they discovered that the human brain has natural cannabis receptors. Why is this so? They found that this is because the body is capable of producing its own narcotic. It can manufacture its own bliss with no external stimulus – and that too, with no hangover!

This particular chemical has been named “anandamide,” based on the Sanskrit word ananda, which means bliss. We can infer from this that happiness is just a certain kind of chemistry. [Peace](#) is another kind of chemistry. In fact, every kind of pleasantness that we experience –whether peace or joy or ecstasy – is a kind of chemistry. The yogic system has always known this.

There is a technology for inner wellbeing – for creating a chemical basis for a blissful existence. This is one dimension of what I call “[Inner Engineering](#).” If you are aware, you can activate your system in such a way that simply breathing is an enormous pleasure. All it takes is a willingness to pay a little attention to the inner mechanism.

This is the fundamental shift in understanding that has to happen. Do not look for a way out of misery. Do not look for a way out of suffering. There is only one way – and that is in.

***Editor’s Note:*** “*Inner Engineering: A Yogi’s Guide to Joy*” by Sadhguru is now available for purchase in [US](#), [UK](#) and in [India](#). Order your copy now!